

INSIDE TODAY

WORLD NEWS

PRIUS PROBE



Secular alliance leader Ayad Allawi, a former prime minister and secular Shiite, shows an inked finger after voting in the Iraqi parliamentary election at a polling station in the Green Zone in Baghdad, Iraq Sunday March 7, 2010.

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SPORTS NEWS

MASTERS RETURN



In this April 14, 2002, file photo, Tiger Woods, wearing his green jacket, gives a thumbs up as he celebrates winning the Masters golf tournament at the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Ga. In a statement Tuesday, March 16, 2010, Woods said he will play at Augusta National after a four-month hiatus because of a sex scandal. The Masters begins on April 8.

Read more on Back Page



Price of a barrel of petroleum

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↑ 1.90

Minister de Meza to meet with Petrobras in Holland

Valero, Aruba government exploring all alternatives for the Aruba refinery

ORANJESTAD—Parliament needs to approve three laws in order to enact the deal reached between the Aruba government and Valero. Prime Minister Mike Eman, Minister of Energy and Finance Mike de Meza in presence of Valero Aruba Refinery VP Ray Buckley outlined the agreement, which among others will have to breathe in new life into the refinery in San Nicolas.

Parliament will have to approve the settlement agreement which includes the 210 million florin pay out to the government, which ends all financial disputes between Aruba and Valero; the abolition of the turnover tax, BBO, on export; and the new fiscal structure for the refinery which entails a seven percent profit tax, with a minimum payment of 10 million florin year for Valero, and if another operator takes over, a minimum of 15 million florins.

Minister de Meza also informed on his continuous efforts to facilitate the successful operation of the refinery, whether it is done so by Valero itself, a new operator, or a combination of both. He will meet for instance, with representatives of Petrobras later this month with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Moreover, the Minister said he has contacts with other, possible parties interested in purchasing the refinery or interested in entering a co-production deal with Valero, which will open up the perspectives for the refinery here.

Continued on Next Page



Minister Mike de Meza

All sides playing hardball on health care bill

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — With time and tempers short, everyone's playing hardball in the drive to pass — or stop — President Barack Obama's massive health care legislation by the weekend.

Business groups are spending \$1 million a day to depict the bill as a job killer in television ads in the home districts of 26 wavering House Democrats.

A new ad barrage from supporters of the legislation went up Tuesday in 11 districts, some overlapping. And unions are threatening some of those lawmakers to come through for Obama — or pay the price in the fall elections.

Continued on Page 4



Health care supporters yell at cars passing by during a tea party protest against the proposed health care plan outside the office of Rep. Melissa Bean, D-Ill., in Schaumburg, Ill. on Tuesday, Mar. 16, 2010.

Associated Press



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Minister Mike de Meza

VALERO*Continued from Front Page*

Prime Minister Eman said the government is doing its utmost to contribute to the fiscal stability for the refinery and at the same time, close of a period of conflict that for years marked the relation between Valero and Aruba, under the previous administration.

The calmness is crucial for joint efforts in seeking solutions for the refinery. However, the Prime Minister said the economic elements, also necessary for the feasibility of the Aruba refinery are not in the hands of the government. Valero executives weigh a daily balance to see whether they can restart the refinery in an economically viable manner, he stated.

The Aruba government leader emphasized the government has until June to seek for solutions in order to secure the job of not only Valero Aruba refinery but also to again provide employment to contractors who lost their jobs when the refinery went on idle last year.

Valero Aruba VP Ray Buckley expressed satisfaction with the labors the government is putting into finding a solution for the refinery. The formalization of the settlement agreement, as well as the other arrangements will allow for a much more

attractive product, he noted. Buckley said Prime Minister Eman and Minister de Meza received an update on all steps the refinery is taking and options it is considering to secure the viability of the refinery. Valero will continue working with the government to identify strategic partners, especially those who in the past have expressed interest in the refinery. On the technical aspect, Valero is busy with a maintenance project at the refinery, especially since the refinery is still importing gasoline, diesel, kerosene, and jet fuel, as well as the fuel for the Water and Electricity Company. Some of the main jobs are concentrating at the Crude Unit #2 which has to undergo a chemical cleaning. The East Flat unit is also operational.

This is the first phase of the project to limit air pollution by way of purifying gasses emitted into the atmosphere. The upkeep of the refinery is being conducted by the employees, who since the operations were halted have been working all over the property to keep it ready for eventual start up or sale.

Whether a previously approved 97 million dollar project at the refinery will be executed or not, is still under evaluation based on what direction negotiations with possible buyers or strategic partners will take. □



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Poll: Public attitudes toward census improving

By HOPE YEN

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — With the 2010 census under way, about 1 in 10 people may not participate in the population count, with many saying they see little personal benefit from the government survey or have concerns that it may be intrusive, according to a poll released Tuesday.

The Pew Research Center poll shows marked improvement in public interest since January. At that time a poll showed 1 in 5 might not mail back the census form. Still, the new poll highlighted lingering apathy toward the head count, particularly among young adults.

“There is an increased commitment to participating in the census, but disparities

remain,” said Michael Dimock, an associate director of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. “These include groups who have less-certain economic situations and who are often more mobile, which poses a challenge for the census count.”

The poll comes as more than 120 million census forms arrive in mailboxes this week. The population count, conducted every 10 years, is used to distribute U.S. House seats and more than \$400 billion in federal aid. Stephen Buckner, a spokesman for the Census Bureau, said the increase in overall public awareness was heartening, noting that the government can save \$1.5 billion in follow-up visits if everyone mails back

their forms.

Buckner said for those who remain apathetic or reluctant to turn in their forms, the bureau will be closely monitoring mail participation rates and will increase advertising and outreach in the regions of the country that are lagging, including college campuses. Beginning in May, the Census Bureau will also send census-takers to visit homes that do not return their forms.

“We’re aware students are historically harder to count, and we are putting things in place to get an accurate count,” he said.

Overall, nearly all of those surveyed by Pew were familiar with the census. About 87 percent reported they had already filled out

their 10-question form, or definitely or probably would do so, often citing reasons that it was “important” or a civic duty.

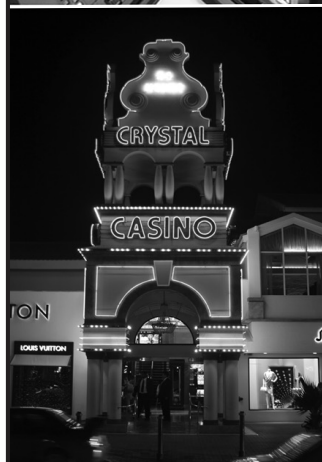
Still, a majority of the people said they saw little personal gain from the census (62 percent) or expressed uncertainty as to whether the government was asking for more information than it really needed (55 percent). Many also said they still weren’t confident that census information would be kept confidential and not be shared with other federal agencies for law enforcement, despite repeated assurances from Census Bureau director

Robert Groves.

Broken down by age, adults 18-29 were least likely to say they would definitely or probably participate, at 71 percent.

That’s compared to 86 percent for adults 30-49; 92 percent for those 50-64; and 89 percent for people 65 and older.

Hispanics also were less likely to participate compared to other racial groups, although that gap has narrowed since January. Pew interviewed 1,500 adults by cell or home phone from March 10-14. The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points, higher for subgroups. □



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Protesters hold signs and yell at passing cars during a tea party protest against the proposed health care plan outside the office of Rep. Melissa Bean, D-Ill., in Schaumburg, Ill. on Tuesday, Mar. 16, 2010.

HARDBALL

Continued from Front Page

Obama has summoned one by one for private, face-to-face persuasion, and also met larger groups. White House aides said he plans at

Associated Press

least one more public health care event this week, including remarks in Fairfax, Va., on Friday. Diverse administration resources are being employed: Even the Navy secretary is in the game.

“We here in Congress are giving a new meaning to March madness,” Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, an opponent of the legislation, said Tuesday.

At stake is a bill that would cover some 30 million uninsured people, end insurance practices such as denying coverage to those with a pre-existing conditions, require almost all Americans to get coverage by law and try to slow the cost of medical care nationwide. The comprehensive legislation could affect nearly every American, from those undergoing annual checkups to people facing major surgery. Activists on both ends of the political spectrum are energized. Tea party volunteers, who rallied Tuesday in Washington, are planning to flood congressional offices with e-mails opposing the legislation as a step toward socialism. And some on the political left have joined in

calling for the bill’s defeat because it leaves out a federal insurance option.

The sought-after Democrats — mainly moderates, but also a few liberals — are mostly trying to stay out of sight. They include 37 who voted against the bill last year and a smaller number who are having second thoughts after supporting it the first time. Walking briskly, lawmakers duck in and out of the House chamber during votes, avoiding eye contact with reporters.

Moderate Rep. Mike McMahon, D-N.Y., is feeling the push and pull. Elected with strong labor support two years ago, he voted against the bill in November, pleasing constituents in his Republican-leaning district on Staten Island who saw it as a government power grab.

Last week, McMahon received a visit from Mike Fishman, president of the Service Employees International Union’s local 32BJ. The blunt message: If you can’t support health care reform, we can’t support you.

The union is threatening to switch its allegiance if he votes against the bill. “Everyone will be looking very, very closely

at this vote,” Fishman’s spokesman, Matthew Nerzig, said with understatement.

At the White House on Tuesday, Obama met with health care executives, including Sister Carol Keehan, head of the Catholic Health Association. In a break with other abortion opponents, the Catholic hospitals are advocating for the bill.

“We think the bill as written now meets the test of no federal funding for abortion,” Keehan said in an interview. She’s letting anti-abortion Democrats know her position announced over the weekend. An estimated \$200 million has been spent for political advertising on health care since the beginning of last year, with groups favoring Obama’s overhaul holding a slight edge. In the final stretch, however, opponents have gotten the upper hand and supporters are rushing to catch up.

A coalition of business groups led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce went up with ads last week. The group is now spending an estimated \$1 million a day, enough for 25 to 40 television ads, said Evan Tracey, president of Kantar Media-CMAG, which tracks political advertising. The ads frame the health care bill as a drag on the economy, raising taxes and saddling companies with expensive new mandates.

Liberal groups are hoping they won’t be too late. Health Care for America Now and several labor unions have announced a \$1.7 million ad buy focusing on the districts of 17 undecided Democrats. Their ads portray the health insurance industry as a profit-hungry predator.

“The ads are designed to get people fired up, so that members feel it coming back from their districts,” said Tracey. “Members are on notice that they may be voting on this now, but their constituents will be voting on it in November.”

House Democratic leaders are still short of the 216 votes they need. While broad outlines of the \$1 trillion, 10-year measure are well known, critical final details are still being ironed out. □

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\$70M in prescription drugs stolen in heist

STEPHANIE REITZ

Associated Press Writer

HARTFORD, Connecticut (AP) — Thieves scaled a wall at a pharmaceutical warehouse over the weekend, cut a hole in the roof and rappelled inside to steal about \$70 million in antidepressants and other prescription drugs, authorities said Tuesday.

The thieves disabled the alarm at the Eli Lilly & Co. warehouse early Sunday in Enfield, where they spent at least an hour loading pallets of drugs into a waiting vehicle at the warehouse's loading dock during a wind-whipped rainstorm, police said.

The thieves, whose identities remained unknown Tuesday, made off with enough drugs to fill at least one tractor-trailer, police said. They will probably end up on the black market, experts said.

"Just by the way it occurred, it appears that there were several individuals involved and that it was a very well planned-out and orchestrated operation," Enfield Police Chief Carl Sferrazza said.

"It's not your run-of-the-mill home burglary, that's for sure."

The FBI has been called in to investigate. Authorities would

not comment on whether the building had surveillance video or whether employees were being investigated.

Edward Sagebiel, a spokesman for Indianapolis-based Eli Lilly, placed the market value of the drugs at \$70 million. They included the antidepressants Prozac and Cymbalta and the anti-psychotic Zyprexa, he said.

The warehouse contained no narcotics or painkillers, he said.

The thieves probably had a buyer lined up — an online pharmacy or someone in South America or Asia, where drug regulations are lax — and could easily make \$20 million from the heist, said Erik Gordon, a professor at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan who studies the health care industry and entrepreneurship.

Police were called early Sunday afternoon to the warehouse, in an industrial park in Enfield, a working-class town on the Massachusetts border.

They estimate the theft occurred several hours earlier as Enfield caught the edges of a nor'easter that battered the region with heavy rain and wind before dawn Sunday.

Sferrazza said officers


determined one or more thieves scaled the exterior brick walls, cut the hole in the roof and rappelled inside with some sort of rope.

There didn't appear to be any outside barriers to the building. □





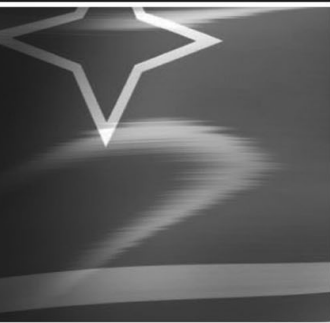
The Eli Lilly warehouse is seen here in Enfield, Conn., Tuesday, March 16, 2010. Authorities say tens of millions of dollars worth of prescription drugs have been stolen in a brazen, well-planned heist at a pharmaceutical company's regional warehouse in Connecticut.

Associated Press



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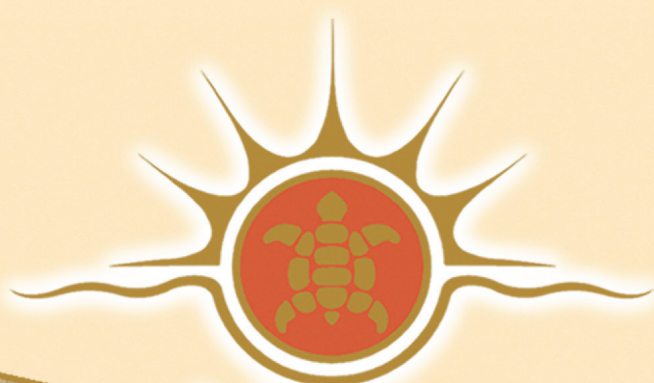
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Clashes erupt in Jerusalem; U.S. envoy cancels visit

AMY TEIBEL

Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM (AP) — Hundreds of Palestinians in east Jerusalem set tires and garbage bins ablaze on Tuesday and hurled rocks at Israeli riot police, who responded with rubber bullets and tear gas. The heaviest clashes in months broke out as an American envoy abruptly canceled a visit, deepening a U.S.-Israeli diplomatic feud. The violence spread from Arab neighborhood to Arab neighborhood across the eastern side of the volatile city. Angered by plans for more Jewish housing in predominantly Arab east Jerusalem and unsubstantiated rumors surrounding the rededication of an Old City synagogue, Palestinians clashed with Israeli forces throughout the day.

In one incident, youths hoisted a giant Palestinian flag and shouted, “We shall die and Palestine shall live.”

Thousands of police, including anti-riot units armed with assault rifles, stun grenades and batons, were deployed across east Jerusalem in anticipation of the unrest.

Palestinian medics said 10 people were seriously wounded, five from rubber bullets. Israeli police said 15 security men suffered light wounds, including one man wounded by gunfire. About 60 protesters were arrested. “They are donkeys and dwarfs!” a woman screamed as riot police and plainclothes security men hauled away a handcuffed, hooded youth. Police pinned the youth to the ground, setting muzzled Doberman pinschers near them as the young man shrieked in panic.

Palestinian merchants in east Jerusalem shuttered their stores in solidarity with the protests, and Palestinian schools in the city were closed. Small clashes also took place in several West Bank towns.

The diplomatic dispute with the U.S. was sparked by Israel’s announcement last week of plans for 1,600 apartments in east Jerusalem, which undercut a visit by Vice President Joe Biden aimed at bolstering peace talks. Palestinians claim that sector of the city for a future capital. Israel claims all of the holy city as its eternal capital.

The announcement enraged Palestinians, who have threatened to bow out of U.S.-brokered peace talks that were supposed to begin in the coming days. The Obama administration has angrily demanded that Israel call off the project.

Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman told Israel Radio on Tuesday that demands to halt construction “are unreasonable.” He predicted the row with the U.S. would blow over.

But Washington notified Israel that its special Mideast envoy, George Mitchell, had indefinitely put off his trip to the region.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Tuesday that Israel must prove it is committed to the Mideast peace process with actions, but she brushed aside suggestions U.S.-Israeli relations are in crisis and reaffirmed America’s steadfast commitment to its security.

In a statement, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s spokesman Mark Regev said, “Israel’s government has proved over the past year



Catherine Ashton, foreground right, the EU foreign and security affairs chief, speaks with Lebanese Foreign Minister Ali Shami, foreground left, upon her arrival at Rafik Hariri International Airport, in Beirut, Lebanon, Tuesday, March 16, 2010. Ashton arrived in Beirut Tuesday to meet with Lebanese officials on her four-day tour in the Middle East at a time when tensions mounted over Israel’s plan to build 1,600 housing units east Jerusalem.

Associated Press

its commitment to peace, in words and in deeds,” noting Netanyahu’s acceptance of the creation of a Palestinian state and the “removal of hundreds of roadblocks and checkpoints” in the West Bank.

Clinton said U.S. and Israeli officials are in intense talks about how to repair the damage caused by Israel’s announcement.

“We are engaged in very active consultations with the Israelis over steps that we think would demonstrate the requisite commitment to the process,” she told a State Department news conference. She did

not say when Mitchell would return to the region.

Netanyahu ordered his ministers and spokespeople not to talk to the media about the construction in east Jerusalem. However, Interior Minister Eli Yishai, whose office issued the order for the new homes, agreed to discuss other issues in an interview with The Associated Press.

Yishai said he hoped the tensions with the Palestinians will calm down. “The riots are not appropriate. There are people who are interested in provoking unrest and inflaming the region,” he said.



Challenger overtakes Iraq PM in overall vote count

BEN HUBBARD

QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA

Associated Press Writers

BAGHDAD (AP)—A secular coalition challenging the Iraqi prime minister in the country's historic parliamentary elections has narrowly pulled ahead for the first time in the overall vote count, although it still trails in the crucial province-by-province count. The Iraqiya coalition, led by former Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, seemed to be gaining momentum, taking a 9,000 vote lead nationwide, according to new totals released late Tuesday. But with about 20 percent of the votes still to be counted from the March 7 election, it was unclear whether that margin would give Allawi more seats in parliament, which will determine who will lead the government.

The news came as Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and his State of Law coalition accused election officials of manipulating vote counts and called for a re-count, a candidate from his bloc said. It was the prime minister's first challenge to the results, and his bloc drew a link between

its accusations and Allawi, accusing some electoral commission staff of having allegiances to groups backing al-Maliki's rival.

Iraq's vote counting has been winding and chaotic, with ballot results being portioned out piecemeal by election officials and almost immediately subject to fraud accusations. The winner will be tasked with forming a government that will oversee the country as U.S. forces go home.

Crucially, with 79 percent of votes counted, al-Maliki's coalition was still winning in seven of Iraq's 18 provinces — including all-important Baghdad—compared with five for Allawi. That could prove important since parliament seats are apportioned mainly by how well coalitions do in the provinces, not according to overall vote total.

Still, the momentum apparent in Allawi's overall, nationwide lead could be troubling the prime minister and his coalition, raising questions about how strong their lead is. The new vote results did not alter the picture much for the religious Shiite Iraqi National



Electoral workers check ballot boxes at a counting center in Baghdad, Iraq, Tuesday, March 16, 2010. Iraq's electoral commission said it has counted 66 percent of votes across the country.

Associated Press

Alliance and the main Kurdish coalition, which lead in three provinces each.

However, in the province of Tamim, Allawi was beating his main challenger, the Kurdish coalition, by only five votes. The province is home to the disputed city of Kirkuk, which is hotly contested among its Kurdish, Arab and Turkomen population.

Allawi, a secular Shiite, has drawn on considerable Sunni support, likely due to his nonsectarian stance and repeated condemnations of the influence of Iraq's powerful Shiite neighbor, Iran. Al-Maliki has drawn on support in the Shiite south as well as in the capital.

With so much at stake, several leading candidates have raised

accusations of fraud.

Before Tuesday's tallies were released, Iraq's prime minister accused election officials of manipulating vote counts and called for a re-count, a candidate from his bloc said. The prime minister's allegations surfaced in a complaint letter to Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission, saying al-Maliki's bloc "received reliable information that supervisors of the electronic counting center" are linked to rival groups contesting the race, including some supporting Allawi.

Ali al-Adeeb, a candidate on al-Maliki's slate, said his coalition is accusing the counting center of doctoring the numbers and is calling for a re-count based on tallies done in the country's more than 50,000 polling stations before their ballots were sent to Baghdad.

The Associated Press obtained a copy of the letter, which is signed by al-Maliki. It says the political allegiance of the counting center's supervisors undermines "their neutrality in administering such a momentous and crucial process" as the tallying of the votes.

The letter singles out Hazim al-Badri, the electronic counting center's manager, claiming he is a member of a Sunni group allied with Allawi. □

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Thai protesters pour own blood at government HQ

By **THANYARAT DOKSONE**,
Associated Press Writer

BANGKOK – Thai protesters seeking a change of government turned to shock tactics Tuesday, pouring gallons of their own blood into a glistening puddle at the gate of the prime minister's office. The dramatic gesture, repeated in front of the headquarters of Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva's Democrat Party, grabbed attention but put the "Red Shirt" protest movement no closer to its goal of forcing new elections.

More than 100,000 demonstrators from all over the country gathered in Bangkok on Sunday, vowing to keep up their protest until victory. But Abhisit has rejected their demands to dissolve Parliament, saying only that he will listen to the protesters' point of view and leaving the situation in a stalemate.

Reporters asked one of the protest leaders what their next move would be, and Veera Musikapong replied, "I want to know that myself." He said the group maps strategy on a day-by-day basis.

The protesters comprise supporters of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted by a 2006 military coup for alleged corruption, and pro-democracy activists who opposed the army takeover. They believe Abhisit came to power illegitimately with the connivance of the military and other parts of the traditional ruling class who

were alarmed by Thaksin's popularity, particularly among the poor.

Thailand has been in political turmoil since early 2006, when anti-Thaksin demonstrations began. In 2008, when Thaksin's political allies came back to power for a year, his "Yellow Shirt" opponents occupied the prime minister's office compound for three months and seized Bangkok's two airports for a week.

On Tuesday, thousands of Red Shirts formed long lines Tuesday morning to have their blood drawn by nurses, a day after their leaders vowed to collect at least 1 million cubic centimeters of blood — 264 gallons — to spill at Government House. They claimed to have collected 300,000 cubic centimeters.

Suriya Laemthong, 28, shielded his eyes with a baseball cap as a nurse pricked his arm. He said he doubted that the blood spilling would compel the government to step down but that he finds the protest leaders' strategies "rational and acceptable."

"If they say that we soldier on, I'm ready," he said.

A few teaspoons of blood were drawn from each volunteer and then transferred into dozens of large plastic water jugs that were passed overhead through the crowd of cheering protesters before being delivered to Government House, the prime minister's office.

"When we see gallons and

gallons of blood here, instead of feeling frightened and horrified, we feel proud that this is the mutual expression of the Thai people," proclaimed Natthawut Saikua, another Red Shirt leader.

The Red Shirts say that if the people are willing to sacrifice their blood, Prime Minister Abhisit should show similar spirit by relinquishing power. Riot police allowed protest leaders to approach the iron front gate and pour out the blood, which oozed under the gate as national television broadcast the images live. A purported Brahmin priest in ceremonial robes performed an unorthodox black magic ritual on the Red Shirts' behalf.

"The blood of the common people is mixing together to fight for democracy," Natthawut told cheering supporters. "When Abhisit works in his office, he will be reminded that he is sitting on




A supporter of ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra holds a blood bottle before spilling at the front gate of the Government House Tuesday, March 16, 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand. Thai protesters poured blood they had donated outside the front gate of the government headquarters Tuesday in a symbolic sacrifice to press their demands for new elections.

Associated Press

the people's blood." Abhisit has not entered his office at Government House since preliminary protests started on Friday.

Minutes afterward, a government medical cleanup

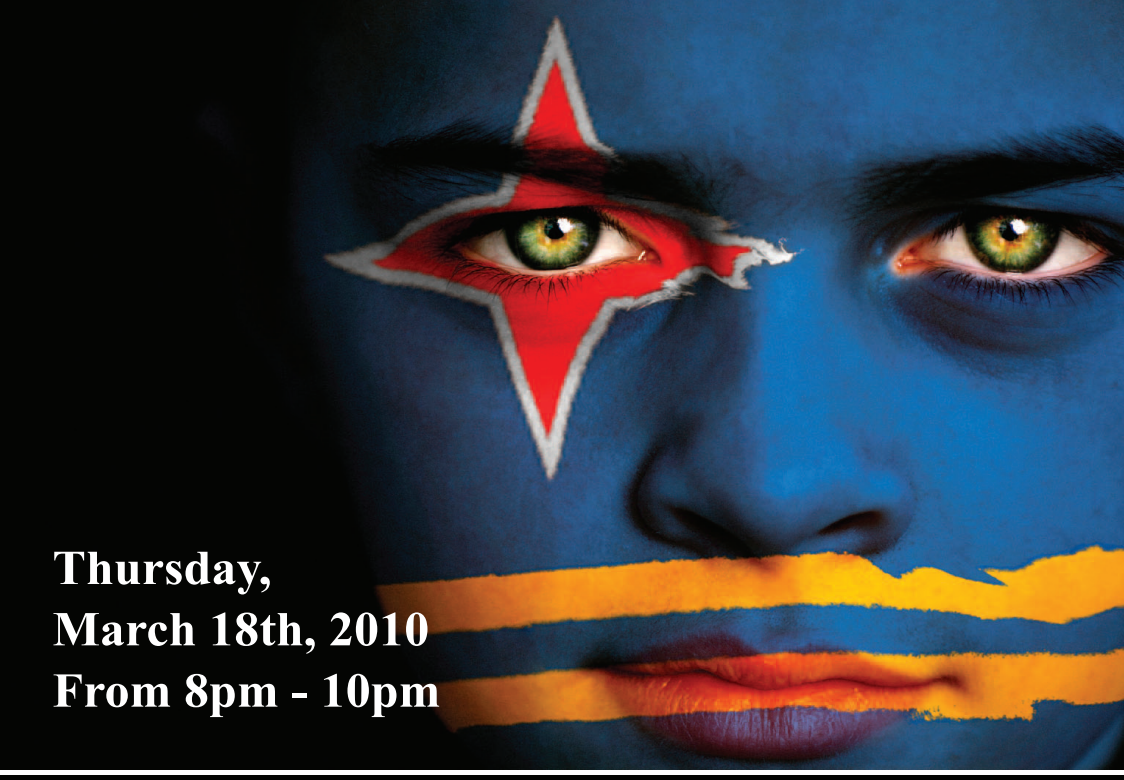
team in white coats, face masks and rubber gloves hosed down the site. Health authorities had warned that the protest risked spreading disease if infected blood splashed healthy bystanders. □



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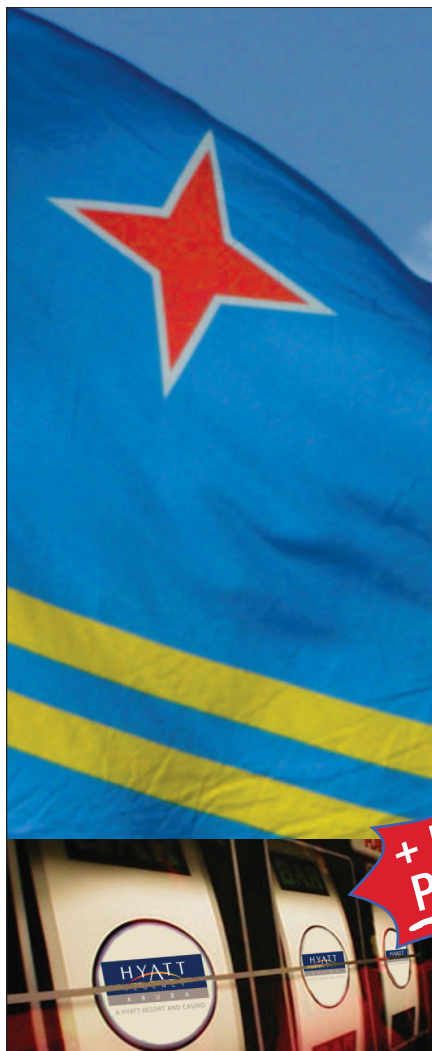
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Stocks rise after Fed pledges to keep rates low

By TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — The Federal Reserve's mildly upbeat take on the economy and its plans to hold interest rates low gave stocks a lift. The Dow Jones industrial average rose almost 44 points Tuesday for its sixth straight gain. Broader indexes also posted moderate advances. Prices for Treasuries rose as the Fed said again that it expects to keep interest rates low for "an extended period." The Fed also said in a statement following its meeting on monetary policy that businesses are spending "significantly" more on equipment and software. The central bank gave a marginally more upbeat assessment of the job market, though it said employers remain reluctant to hire.

"That's a major statement. That's saying that that's one major risk that's going to remain for a while," said Guy LeBas, chief fixed income strategist of Janney Montgomery Scott in Philadelphia.

Many investors appear relieved that the Fed will hold rates low to help the economy recover. As the economy improves, the Fed will need to start raising rates to stop prices from rising too fast. For now, though, the Fed repeated its belief that inflation is likely to remain subdued.

The Fed's statement hurt the dollar, which draws support from higher rates. The central bank's assessment of the economy also lessened investors' need to find safe places like the dollar to invest in.

The dollar's slide, in turn, raised commodity prices and the stocks of energy and materials companies.

The Fed also said it still plans to

stop buying mortgage-backed securities from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac at the end of the month. Policymakers also noted that construction of homes has been little changed and remains weak.

"We are passing through a historic phase where the Fed's emergency responses to the Great Recession are now behind us and we're incrementally getting back to business as usual," said Robert Dye, senior economist at PNC Financial Services Group in Pittsburgh.

Stocks rose earlier after the Standard & Poor's credit rating agency signed off on Greece's plan to slash its budget deficit. That eased concerns that the country will default on debt, and that its problems might hurt the economies of other European nations. The 16 countries that share the euro agreed to help Greece with loans if necessary.

The Dow rose 43.83, or 0.4 percent, to 10,685.98. It's up 1.3 percent in that time.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 8.95, or 0.8 percent, to 1,159.46, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 15.80, or 0.7 percent, to 2,378.01.

The stock market has been recording modest gains for more than a month. Major stock indexes stand at or near their best levels in more than a year. Investors are looking for signs that the recovery is strong enough to justify the steep rebound in stocks in the past 12 months.

The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite its price, fell to 3.66 percent from 3.70 percent late Monday.

The dollar fell against other major currencies, while gold prices rose.

Crude oil rose \$1.90 to \$81.70

per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange as the dollar fell. A weaker dollar makes commodities less expensive to foreign buyers.

The Fed's decision on mortgage buying came as investors saw new evidence that housing remains weak. The Commerce Department said Tuesday that construction of homes fell 5.9 percent last month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 575,000 units. That was slightly better than the rate of 570,000 units economists polled by Thomson Reuters predicted.



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, February 5, 2010.

REUTERS/Brendan McDermid



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LT lured to NY by familiar offense, chance to win



FILE - In this Jan. 17, 2010 file photo, San Diego Chargers running back LaDainian Tomlinson looks on before an NFL divisional playoff game against the New York Jets in San Diego. Tomlinson says playing in a familiar offensive scheme on a team with a chance to win a championship and living in New York played major roles in choosing to join the Jets. The former San Diego running back, recently cut by the Chargers, signed with New York over Minnesota on Sunday, March 14, 2010, after visiting both teams last week.

Associated Press

By DENNIS WASZAK Jr.

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK — LaDainian Tomlinson wants to cap his career with a Super Bowl ring.

He believes the New York Jets can help him deliver on that dream.

"There would be no greater place than to bring a championship to the city

of New York," Tomlinson said during a conference call Tuesday.

The eighth-leading rusher in NFL history chose New York over Minnesota, signing a two-year deal worth about \$5.2 million on Sunday with the Jets after visiting both teams last week.

"It was pretty tough, but when it comes down to it, you've got to go with your gut feeling, no matter what," Tomlinson said. "You've just got to go with a feel, and that's what I did."

Tomlinson, cut last month after nine seasons in San Diego and a career-low 730 yards rushing, said playing in a familiar offensive scheme under coordinator Brian Schottenheimer and living in New York played major roles

in his decision.

"I will tell you I've come here to win a championship, and I believe this team has the ability to do it," Tomlinson said. That should immediately endear him to Jets fans, who have been waiting to celebrate a title since Joe Namath delivered on his guarantee in 1969. New York came within a win of a Super Bowl appearance last season, beating Tomlinson and the Chargers along the way.

Tomlinson, who turns 31 in June, acknowledged he no longer has the "long" speed he once had when he was one of the league's most dynamic players. But he insists he's in great shape, is feeling healthy and still has "very good speed."

"I have to prove to people

where I am at this point in my career that I can still play this game, and I'm very confident I can," said Tomlinson, who has 12,490 career yards rushing.

Tomlinson believes he'll be able to contribute more with New York than if he chose to back up Adrian Peterson in Minnesota, something general manager Mike Tannenbaum confirmed.

"We expect him to play a lot," Tannenbaum said. "We expect him to touch the ball a lot."

Tomlinson will report to the team when it begins its offseason program next Monday. He insists he's OK with a complementary role — he's expected to back up Shonn Greene, who made Thomas Jones expendable — after being a longtime focal point of the Chargers' offense.

"I have no ego," Tomlinson said. "At this point, it's all about having the opportunity to win a championship. ... The Jets made it to the AFC championship without me. How can I come in here and demand to be a starter? They were very good without me. I just want to be able to have a role on this team and contribute."

Tomlinson joins a rushing offense that ranked No. 1 in the NFL last season with 172.2 yards per game. He's also reunited with Schottenheimer, who was the Chargers' quarterbacks coach from 2002-05 and runs the same type of system in which Tomlinson became one of the league's most dynamic players.

"I'll just say this: This is my type of football," Tomlinson said.

The Jets went after Tomlinson hard despite his least productive season and questions about whether he has much left. □

IAAF wants 2004 relay team stripped of gold

By RAF CASERT

AP Sports Writer

DOHA, Qatar — The IAAF is recommending the U.S. women's 4x400 meter relay team at the 2004 Athens Olympics be stripped of its gold medal because qualifying runner Crystal Cox has admitted to doping.

The IOC has opened a formal investigation into the case, and the IAAF international athletics federation said Monday that under its rules the "U.S. relay team results will be disqualified."

The U.S. Anti-Doping Agency said this year that Cox admitted to using anabolic steroids and accepted a four-year suspension and disqualification of her results from 2001 to 2004. Her admission came after an investigation that was triggered by information from the BALCO case.

If the U.S. is stripped of its medal, Russia would move from silver to gold and Jamaica from bronze to silver.

Cox ran in the prelims for the American team led by Sanya Richards, who ran the final along with Dee Dee Trotter, Monique Henderson and Monique Hennegan.

Under international rules, an entire relay team can be disqualified because of the doping of one member, even an alternate.

IOC vice president Thomas Bach is heading a three-man panel into the case.

Past panel decisions have resulted in the IOC stripping national relay teams of medals retroactively — including three U.S. teams from the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

The IAAF deals with official results and placings at the Olympics but had no specific rule in place in 2000 for dealing with a relay team in the event of doping by a single member.

However, at the Athens games four years later the IAAF had a rule specifying that the entire team should be disqualified and lose medals.



The US women's 4x400m relay team hold up their national flag after winning gold at the 2004 Athens Olympics. The team will be stripped of the medal after Crystal Cox (2nd left) was suspended for doping.

(AFP/File/Aris Messinis)

"It was always going to be clear to us," IAAF spokesman Nick Davies said. "The rule was in effect in 2004."

The admission by Cox came after an investigation that was triggered by information that came from the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative case.

The IOC and IAAF are still waiting for the results of an appeals case involving U.S. women's relay runners from the 2000 Games.

The U.S. was stripped of the gold medal in the 4x400 relay and bronze in the 4x100 relay following Marion Jones' admission of doping. Jones returned her medals, but her teammates appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in an attempt to keep theirs. CAS is due to rule on the case this year. □

NHL Roundup

Clarkson's 2 points lift Devils over Bruins 3-2

The Associated Press
NEWARK, New Jersey (AP) — David Clarkson had a goal and an assist as the New Jersey Devils scored three times in the first period against Tim Thomas and held on for a 3-2 victory over the Boston Bruins on Monday night. Clarkson took the shot that Rob Niedermayer deflected in and then scored on a breakaway — set up by goaltender Martin Brodeur — to make it 2-0. Zach Parise finished the barrage that assured the Devils their 18th straight .500-plus season. Blake Wheeler scored for the third consecutive game to cut Boston's deficit to 3-1 at 43 seconds of the middle

period. Blue Jackets 5, Oilers 3. At Columbus, Ohio, Antoine Vermette had two assists and scored the clinching empty-netter, while Kristian Huselius added a goal and three assists for Columbus. Jake Voracek, Chris Clark and Marc Methot also scored for the Blue Jackets, who totaled only three goals in their previous two games. Derek Dorsett chipped in with two assists for the first multipoint game of his 91-game career. It was a wild, wide-open game full of odd-man rushes. That wasn't a surprise, since the two teams rank near the bottom of the NHL in goals allowed. Robert Nilsson and Aaron

Johnson each had a goal and an assist and Dustin Penner also scored for the Oilers. Red Wings 2, Flames 1. At Calgary, Tomas Holmstrom scored his 20th goal of the season with 1:19 left in the third period to lift Detroit past the hosts. The Red Wings extended their lead to three points ahead of the Flames for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Western Conference with 13 games remaining for each team. Pavel Datsyuk also scored for Detroit, which won its third straight. **In other NHL matches it was, New Jersey 3, Boston 2; Columbus 5, Edmonton 3; and Detroit 2, Calgary 1.** □



New Jersey Devils goalie Martin Brodeur blocks a shot by Boston Bruins' David Krejci, left, during the first period of an NHL hockey game Monday, March 15, 2010, in Newark, N.J.

Associated Press



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NBA Roundup

Celtics coast to 119-93 victory over Pistons



Boston Celtics center Rasheed Wallace dunks against the Detroit Pistons during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game in Boston, Monday, March 15, 2010. Wallace played the past five seasons for the Pistons before signing with the Celtics.

Associated Press

BOSTON (AP)—Paul Pierce, Ray Allen and Michael Finley scored 15 points apiece, and Kevin Garnett had 14 points and eight rebounds on Monday night to help the Boston Celtics coast to a 119-93 victory over the Detroit Pistons.

Boston rested its starters in the fourth quarter while beating a non-contender for the second straight home game. But in between was a 104-93 loss at Cleveland that could be a more important measurement of where the Celtics stand in the playoff hunt.

Will Bynum had 16 points and seven assists, and Jason Maxiell had 11 points and

10 rebounds for the Pistons, who lost Tayshaun Prince to a first-quarter back injury, then slumped to their ninth loss in 11 games.

Lakers 124, Warriors 121

At Oakland, Kobe Bryant scored 29 points and Pau Gasol added 26 to lead the Los Angeles Lakers to their ninth straight victory over the Golden State Warriors.

Andrew Bynum added 19 points and 14 rebounds, and Lamar Odom had 17 points and 12 boards for the Lakers, who have won three straight following their first three-game losing streak in more than two years.

The Lakers led by 11 late in the fourth quarter but barely held on for the victory. It wasn't sealed until Stephen Curry and Monta Ellis missed 3-pointers in the final seconds. Ellis' last-ditch attempt bounced on the rim three times before falling aside at the buzzer.

Curry scored 29 points for the Warriors, who have lost seven of eight.

At Houston, Aaron Brooks scored 31 points, including a jumper with 2.9 seconds left, to help the Rockets end Denver's six-game winning streak.

Carmelo Anthony scored 45 points for the Nuggets, but missed a 3-point attempt at the buzzer. Luis Scola grabbed the final rebound and finished with 23 points and 11 boards. Scola was coming off a career-high, 44-point game, and converted a key three-point play with 41 seconds remaining to put Houston ahead 122-121.

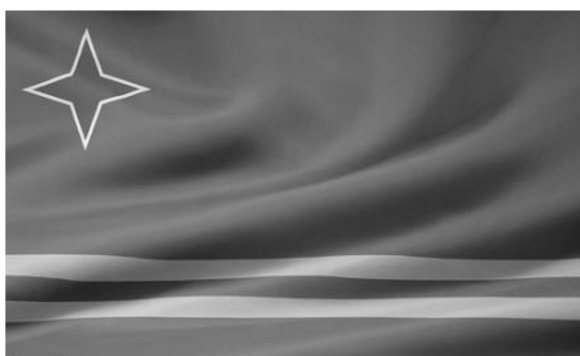
In other NBA games it was New York 94, Philadelphia 84; Boston 119, Detroit 93; Houston 125, Denver 123; Utah 112, Washington 89; L.A. Lakers 124, Golden State 121; and New Orleans 108, L.A. Clippers 100. □



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Lance Mackey wins Iditarod for 4th straight time

By RACHEL D'ORO

Associated Press Writer

NOME, Alaska — Lance Mackey won the 1,100-mile Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race on Tuesday to become the first musher in the event's 38-year history to win four consecutive races.

Fans bundled up against subzero temperatures cheered the 39-year-old throat cancer survivor as his team coasted up the main street of this old Gold Rush town. For winning, Mackey gets a new Dodge truck and \$50,400. He finished the race in eight days, 23 hours and 59 minutes.

"These are my heroes right here," Mackey said seconds after crossing the finish line as he was giving his dogs a pat on their heads and a kiss. He then planted a kiss on his new truck.

Mackey said his relationship with his team is more rewarding than winning another truck.

"They might not be the fastest team in this race but I think they have the biggest hearts," he said.

The Iditarod kicked off March 6 with a ceremonial start in Anchorage. That was followed by the competitive start the following day in Willow when 71 teams took to the Iditarod trail and headed to Nome.

This year's purse was

significantly less than last year when Mackey took home a truck and \$69,000. The total purse is \$590,000 — down from a high of \$925,000 in 2008. Iditarod officials said the struggling economy caused some sponsors to pull their support for the race.

Much of the race again this year was a duel between Mackey — whose father Dick and brother Rick are past winners — and another mushing royal, four-time champion Jeff King of Denali Park. King has said this will be his last Iditarod.

King had been leading much of the race but was overtaken by Mackey on Saturday in the village of Kaltag, about 350 miles from the finish. King chose to rest his team and Mackey, renown for his ability to run his dogs long distances with little rest, opted to keep going.

King cut his rest in Unalakleet to pursue Mackey, who widened the lead after that.

"It's been no secret, for years, I've been willing to gamble. Not at the expense of my team, I hope," Mackey said, when asked about this year's winning strategy.

Mackey said the decisive move was a "monster run" that actually began before Kaltag and extended to

Unalakleet on Alaska's west coast. After a 42-mile run from Nulato, King stopped in Kaltag but Mackey pushed on another 90 miles to the next checkpoint, giving him a lead that he never relinquished.

"It worked. I capitalized on that hour, hour-and-a-half lead," he said.

In the final stretch, Hans Gatt of Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, chased Mackey hard, pushing ahead of King in Elim on Monday. The 51-year-old musher, a four-time winner of the 1,000-mile Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race, was expected to arrive second in Nome.

King, 54, was expected to be third. His last Iditarod win was in 2006, before he relinquished the crown to Mackey.

This year's Iditarod was marked by bitter cold that plunged to 30 below, further chilled by powerful winds in sections of the trail. Mackey, whose cancer treatments left him with circulation problems, complained the cold was affecting his hands and feet.

Still, the trail was a fast run for front-runners including Ken Anderson of Fairbanks, expected to be fourth into Nome, John Baker of Kotzebue and Hugh Neff of Tok. □



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Woods will return to golf at Masters on April 8

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

PALM HARBOR, Florida (AP) — For Tiger Woods, this figures to be a Masters like no other.

Woods said Tuesday he will end more than four months of seclusion and play at Augusta National in three weeks, shielded by the most secure environment in golf as he competes for the first time since a sex scandal shattered his image.

“The Masters is where I won my first major and I view this tournament with great respect,” Woods said in a statement. “After a long and necessary time away from the game, I feel like I’m ready to start my season at Augusta.” The Masters begins April 8.

No other major championship attracts such a large television audience, and that’s under normal circumstances.

Already the most popular figure in golf with his 82 worldwide victories and 14 majors — four of them at the Masters — Woods returns as a disgraced star who will be under the greatest scrutiny of his career.

“We’re all looking forward to having him back. We want him playing,” Jim Furyk said. “I’m sure we’re also looking forward to everything being business as usual. And it’s going to take awhile. We know that.”

Woods last competed Nov. 15 when he won the Australian Masters in Melbourne. Twelve days later, he rammed his sport utility vehicle over a fire hydrant and into a tree outside his Florida home, an accident that set off sordid tales of extramarital affairs. Woods announced Dec. 11 that he would take an indefinite break to try to save his marriage.

“The major championships have always been a special focus in my career and, as a



This April 10, 2005, file photo shows Tiger Woods, left, getting the Green Jacket from Phil Mickelson, right, after winning the 2005 Masters at the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Ga. In a statement Tuesday, March 16, 2010, Woods said he will play at Augusta National after a four-month hiatus because of a sex scandal. The Masters begins on April 8.

professional, I think Augusta is where I need to be, even though it’s been a while since I last played,” Woods said.

“I have undergone almost two months of inpatient therapy and I am continuing my treatment,” he said. “Although I’m returning to competition, I still have a lot of work to do in my personal life.”

Augusta National chairman Billy Payne said the club supported Woods’ decision to make his return at the Masters, adding that “we support and encourage his stated commitment to continue the significant work required to rebuild his personal and professional life.”

PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem also said he was pleased to learn of Woods’ return.

The Associated Press first reported last Thursday that Woods would not play until the Masters, despite other published stories that he would

return this week at the Arnold Palmer Invitational in Orlando, Florida. There has been so much buzz that when Finchem held a teleconference Monday on an undisclosed topic, the call was loaded with media suspecting an announcement on Woods’ return. Instead, it was to announce a new title sponsor.

Small wonder that CBS Sports president Sean McManus said last week of Woods’ return to golf: “My only prediction is when he comes back, it will be, other than the Obama inauguration, one of if not the biggest media spectacle in recent memory.”

ESPN will televise the first two rounds of the Masters, and CBS Sports has the weekend. The highest TV rating for the Masters in the cable era was a 14.1 on the Sunday in 1997 when Woods, then 21, became the tournament’s youngest champion with a record 12-shot victory.

“Wow I’ve had a lot of calls today from friends who have decided to come to the Masters this year,” British Open champion Stewart Cink said on Twitter.

“Obviously, the ratings will be off the chart,” said PGA Tour player Heath Slocum.

“It will be interesting to watch — not only the reaction from him, but from the fans, the media, the players. I would venture to say he might be nervous.”

The Masters — “A tradition like no other” is a longtime CBS promo — has restrictions like no other major. Media credentials are limited even in normal circumstances, and the club has tight control over who gets in. Some fans with season badges risk losing them forever for violating rules, such as being caught with a cell phone or a camera. Among the rules: No running. Most players expect Woods to be heckled, although not

as much — if any — at the Masters.

“That’s why Augusta makes such good sense,” Furyk said. “There’s less of that than anywhere else. Everyone is afraid to lose their ticket. The etiquette and behavior is far better than anywhere else because of the fear factor.”

Still to be determined is the state of his game.

Woods left for a Mississippi clinic for therapy on Dec. 31 — the day after his 34th birthday — and returned Feb. 11 to prepare for his first public appearance at the TPC Sawgrass when he apologized for his behavior and confessed to extramarital affairs. He took no questions.

He spent another week in Arizona for family therapy, returning Feb. 27 and heading to the practice range to get back into a routine. His coach, Hank Haney, was with him at Isleworth last week.

There had been reports he would play the Tavistock Cup exhibition next week in Orlando, followed by the Arnold Palmer Invitational at Bay Hill, where he is the defending champion and a six-time winner.

“When I finally got into a position to think about competitive golf again, it became apparent to me that the Masters would be the earliest I could play,” Woods said.

Woods twice has gone to a major without having competed after a long layoff — nine weeks — and had mixed results. He missed the cut at Winged Foot for the 2006 U.S. Open after his father died, and he won the 2008 U.S. Open at Torrey Pines while playing on a shattered left knee that kept him out the rest of the year.

“It’s obviously great for golf that he’s back,” three-time major champion Padraig Harrington said. □

Succulent Steaks at Tango Argentine Grill Tango Restaurant prepares for St. Paddy's Day and Flag Day



PALM BEACH – Tonight and tomorrow night are evenings to celebrate with good food and good wine. Everyone loves the delicious flavors from one of Aruba's most popular Argentinean restaurants. Distinguished guests of Aruba Susanne and Chuck from Ohio love Tango Argentine Grill, where superb steak is not just a meal but an art form! Once you dine at the TANGO, Aruba's first-class Parilla, you will know that Argentine Beef is Simply the Best. Each night the Award-winning Chef is grilling only the very finest cuts of Beef on an authentic Parilla Charcoal Grill. Flavorful Argentine Steaks are Extraordinary and famed the World over. Delicious and juicy cuts of mouth-watering steaks are joined by hearty side dishes with a typical Argentine Chimichurri Herb Sauce to discernibly compliment your Steak. All this is offered up by top-notch servers who take all twenty impressive cuts of their beef seriously. Because no Parilla is complete without a magnificent bottle of red wine, your server can recommend a spectacular choice from the extensive wine list. And speaking of Sizzle, the Succulent Steaks aren't the only things that sizzle nightly. The Tango Argentine Parilla hosts Live Music where the ambiance is hotter than ever. Tango Argentine Grill is located in ARAWAK GARDENS in the high rise hotel section. □



VIPs enjoy Hadicurari and MooMba Beach

Prime Minister Mike Eman speaks to Hadicurari guests



HADICURARI - One of the major software companies of the world organized a 3 course dinner at Hadicurari for their best sales people and managers.

The company, which specializes in government automation and service companies, takes their top associates to great destinations and this year they chose Aruba. New York, Beijing, Johannesburg, Bangkok, Rome were previous destinations. This year, Aruba Wine & Dine restaurants (Hadicurari and MooMba Beach) were the locations chosen to entertain this group of executives. Champagne and fine dining combined with the best service and quality were provided to the 70 people visiting Aruba from Europe, Canada and the United States.

The event was complimented with a brass band and impressive transportation from their hotel to Hadicurari Beach. After the main course



the Prime Minister of Aruba gave a speech and prizes were officially handed over to the guests.

On Monday, MooMba Beach prepared a wonderful lunch for the group before their departure. □

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Brickell Bay Beach Club Entertains CATA delegates



PALM BEACH – The welcome reception of CATA, Convencion Anual de Turismo di Aruba, the annual tourism conference targeting Latin American markets, was held at the newly renovated Brickell Bay Beach Club. The convention is co-sponsored by The Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA) and the Aruba Hotel and Tourism Authority (AHATA), inviting over 85 travel experts and professionals to participate in this informative and educational event. Brickell Bay Beach Club which is a small boutique property orchestrated a large scale reception that included a friendly property tour, a magnificent show and a

delicious buffet of varied hot and cold hors d'oeuvres. General Manager Lucia Fernandez, Reservations Manager Janet Arrindell, Coordinator Virginia Peters and Sales and Marketing Manager Mónica Jiménez, welcomed guests to the resort, on the tropical pool deck with attractive welcome drinks, and warm smiles. The show given in honor of the dignitaries under the stars featured a parade of flags, body-painted on local models, as well as a fun fashion show, culminating with a festive presentation of the Aruban flag, in honor of the upcoming Flag & Anthem Day celebrations. Pictured here owner Mike Posner with Mónica Jiménez,



also General Manager Lucia Fernandez and her crew with guests. Brickell Bay Beach Club, in the heart of Aruba's famous Palm Beach, offers visitors a

relaxed and tranquil vacation experience graced with all contemporary conveniences found in large branded hotels, delivered with a more personal and intimate approach. □



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Full Schedule of entertainment at Café Rembrandt and South Beach Centre

Camacuri Flag Day Rally At South Beach Center



PALM BEACH - It's hard to miss with all the announcements around, but on Thursday March 18th Aruba celebrates its National Flag & Anthem Day. To celebrate this day of national pride, Café Rembrandt and South Beach Centre in Palm Beach have organized several days of festivities for everyone to enjoy.

From Wednesday March 17th till Sunday March 21st, Aruba will be the décor for the Camacuri Flag Day Rally 2010. About 500 bikers from different Caribbean islands have gathered in Aruba to join this amazing and unique

biker's ride. Each day the final stop will be at South Beach Center. Café Rembrandt celebrates this event with smashing performances by



some of the best top bands on the island. The parking lot behind South Beach Center will be full with all the bikes and everyone is invited to admire that stunning view. There is no cover charge to visit the parking lot, south Beach Center or Café Rembrandt.

The kickoff party will take place on Wednesday March 17th with the celebration of St. Patrick's Day. The excellent Rock Band 'Acoustic Soul' will perform live on the outdoor stage between Café Rembrandt and Milano, starting at 10.30pm.

On Thursday, at 9:30pm, you can get into a real Salsa & Latin mood with the spectacular band '3Som'. And don't forget to get ready for Friday night as Aruba's hit band 'Tsunami' will hit the stage at 10pm for a 3 hour concert.

On Sunday March 21st the closing party will take place with a variety of beats by DJ



Vince.

Especially for this event the bar and restaurants at South Beach Center have joined forces and will be offering beers and mix drinks for great prices from Wednesday till Sunday. So, don't hesitate

and celebrate St. Patrick's Day, Aruba Flag Day and the Camacuri Flag Day Rally with the people at South Beach Center: Café Rembrandt, Milano, South Beach Lounge, Café De Pijp, Hardrock Café and Busters! □



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"Spring has sprung at Sopranos Piano Bar!!!!"

ARAWAK GARDEN - With the arrival of spring break the party is in full swing at Sopranos Piano Bar every night. Looking to get away from the cool temperatures at home, visitors to our island have found Sopranos Piano Bar the place to be. With Jim Hitte playing their favorite requests great nights of fun & dancing keeps them

coming back night after night. Shelly pictured here with Jim and two of her friends commented, "We came to Sopranos our first night in Aruba and have been back every night since!!!! Sopranos ROCKS!!!! Sopranos is located in the Arawak Gardens across the street from the Occidental Grand Resort. ☐



Family Flag Day

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Flag Day Brunch at the Country Club
Thursday, March 18th from 11:00am to 3:00pm

Salads

Caribbean Potato Salad
Mixed Greens with Orange Balsamic Vinaigrette
Tomato Cucumber Salad with Goat Cheese
Romaine Salad with Garlic Croutons and Crispy Bacon

Soup Station

Sopi Yambo

Omelet Station

Your Omelet made to order with your choices of: mushrooms, cheese, bell pepper, ham, bacon, green scallions

Dessert Station

Quesillo, Pan Bojo, Assorted Cakes, Pies and Fresh Fruit

Waffle and Pancake Station

Fluffy pancakes and Belgium waffles with toppings including: Marinated Strawberries, Maple Syrup, Red Fruit Sauce, Vanilla Walnut Butter, Powder Sugar, Honey Drizzle

Seafood Fountain

Peel-n-eat Shrimp
Spicy Black Peppered Tuna Loin
Smoked Salmon
Peruvian Seafood Ceviche

Chef's Flavors Station

Keshi-Yena
Grilled Salmon Fillet in Citrus Butter Sauce
Grouper Fillet in Creole Sauce
Cabrito Stoba
Beef Tenderloin in Creamy Shitake Sauce

Side Items

Potato Gratin
Oven Roasted Potatoes
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Seasonal Vegetables
Caribbean Fried Rice
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Tickets available at Jolly Pirates Shop at MooMba Beach. Boarding at MooMba Beach- by the high rise hotels between Holiday Inn and Marriott Resorts. Offer not valid in combination with other discount offers. Valid for direct telephone reservations only - Present coupon upon boarding.

Papillon Restaurant celebrates

Flag & National Anthem Day with Aruban flair



PALM BEACH - On Thursday, March 18, Aruba celebrates its Flag- and National Anthem Day and the island is playing a starring role for a change. The beautiful National Anthem, written in the 1950's by local top musicians Padu Lampe and Rufo Wever, will be played many times during this special day. The anthem is written in an English waltz, and it is a catchy tune. You will find the words in the special, Aruban menu that Papillon Restaurant offers.

Starters are either a Giambo, a thick soup of okra and beef or Keri Keri croquettes, filled with a spiced fish ragout and served with a lime sauce. Main course options are the popular Keshi Yena, a tasty stew of chicken, cashews, raisins, peppers and onions, covered in a Dutch (Edam)

cheese or Sabechi, grouper filet with peppers, onions, green olives and tomatoes, served straight from the oven with fried bananas and funchi fries. Dessert is the all-time favorite Quesillo, an Aruban flan with a dash of brandy, served with fresh strawberries and a Ponche Aruba sauce.

After eating this exquisite Aruban menu, Papillon's staffers are sure that you will feel more local than the locals, at least culinary-wise, on this special, festive day. Papillon Restaurant is located across from the Radisson Resort in The Village on the high rise strip. □



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matinee:	2:00 late show: 12:00
PG	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"
daily:	1:00 3:15 late show:
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PG	VALENTINE'S DAY
daily:	6:30 9:00
matinee:	12:45 3:45 late show: 11:45
R	THE WOLFMAN
daily:	6:00 8:45
matinee:	12:15 3:00 late show: 11:30
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daily:	5:30 8:15
matinee:	12:15 3:00 late show: 11:00
PG	PERCY JACKSON & THE OLYMPIANS
daily:	6:00
matinee:	12:30 3:15 late show:
PG	EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES
daily:	8:45
matinee:	late show: 11:15
R	FROM PARIS WITH LOVE
daily:	4:00 6:15 8:30
matinee:	1:45 late show: 11:00
PG-13	AVATAR 3D
daily:	4:45 8:00
matinee:	1:30 late show: 11:15
R	SHUTTTER ISLAND
daily:	5:30 8:30
matinee:	2:30 late show: 11:30

Matinee: sat - sun | Late show: fri & sat



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*** HUMAN HINTS ***

Money And You - Practical Applications

Yesterday, we discussed our personal relationship with money. We concluded that rich/poor and lack/abundance represent our own attitudes about ourselves. Those attitudes are often unconsciously dictated by fear, greed, guilt, and all the other self-sabotaging emotions we face. Today, we introduce a simple, effective method of changing your attitudes about yourself and money.

Think of money as an entity, a living creature that directly affects your life. We know that life is consciousness expressing through physical form, and the consciousness that enters into money, is your own. The living entity of money is a separate aspect of your Self. Do you think of yourself as abundant? Are you truly a creature that Shall Not Want, in spite of what your three dimensional circumstances tell you? Or are you haunted by lack, no matter how abundant some areas of your life may be?

To allow ourselves to be abundant, we must become comfortable with money. We must feel it's presence in our lives as a dear unconditional friend who caters to our every whim, without question or hesitation. Don't be greedy with money. Protect your money and don't give what you can't afford to give, but don't cling to money as if you'll never have it again. The law of reciprocity is always in effect. The more you give, the more you will get, but don't give away what you need to survive.

Money is not your enemy. We have been conditioned to see money as something that is hard to get, almost impossible to accumulate, and a pain in the ass to deal with. These attitudes are now outdated and obsolete. It is time to see money and abundance in a new light.

Every time you consider money, consider your best friend. Would you protect your best friend if it were threatened? Would you lock your best friend in a safety deposit box, never to see the

light of day? Would you look for opportunities for your best friend to participate in life and grow from experience? Would you risk your best friend's life on a hunch?

Money is your best friend. Be proud of it. Be comfortable in its presence. When you think of money as a stranger, you will be awkward and uncomfortable around it, and it will respond to your uncertain energy with uncertainty. When you are confident and comfortable with money as your best friend, your money will show up in your life with confidence. Money will not be fleeting and unstable when you are confident about it.

Do not flaunt your money, or even tell people about it, just as you would not shamelessly brag about how many best friends you have. Know that you are worthy of having money, because you now respect and appreciate your self. You will no sooner abuse money than you would abuse your self or your best friend.


Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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ORANJESTAD - Casa Tua Barcelona's Flamenco Show is the spot to be tonight with Angela Croes TONIGHT and then again on Friday. On Thursday enjoy the amazing sounds Kavey Yarzagaray.

Enjoy your Paella and Sangria together with these fantastic live shows! The downtown atmosphere is cool and relaxed with its in- and outside seating.

The highlight at Casa Tua Barcelona is also the new lunch specials every weekday from Monday till Friday! A \$9.95 lunch special; Beef tenderloin



with a red wine sauce or choose the Grouper Fillet for \$11.95. Both dishes include a soft drink. Fresh Fish lovers can treat the palate to the Whole Red Snapper, served with Rice and a salad.

All days of the week we serve Cold and Hot tapas as appetizers or the delicious Iberian Ham Pata Negra which we import directly from Andalucía. As your main course you could choose our Paella, traditionally prepared on the spot by our chef! Combine this Spanish dish with our home-made sangria to complete your dinner.

Of course we saved the best for last as no one does an ending better than Casa Tua with their dreamy Tiramisu. If you're into something different we suggest tasting the Espresso Martini Cocktail as dessert, you won't be disappointed.

The best part about such a good ending is that it guarantees you'll be back for more...



Casa Tua Barcelona Downtown open from 11.30am to 10.30pm, Sunday from 5pm to 11pm tel. 588 5695. Casa Tua Palm Beach open from 5pm to 11pm, tel 586 8470

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PALM BEACH – The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan.

Low carb eaters will have all their expectations surpassed with a tempting carnivorous selection of umpteen cuts of sizzling beef, pork, lamb, sausage, and poultry. The meats are prepared in the healthiest style of cooking—slow roasting—where much of the fat drips off in the roasting process, so those looking for a lower fat option to sautéing, pan frying, or deep frying will also be able to indulge.

The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers up a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, home-made soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, Texas de Brazil will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

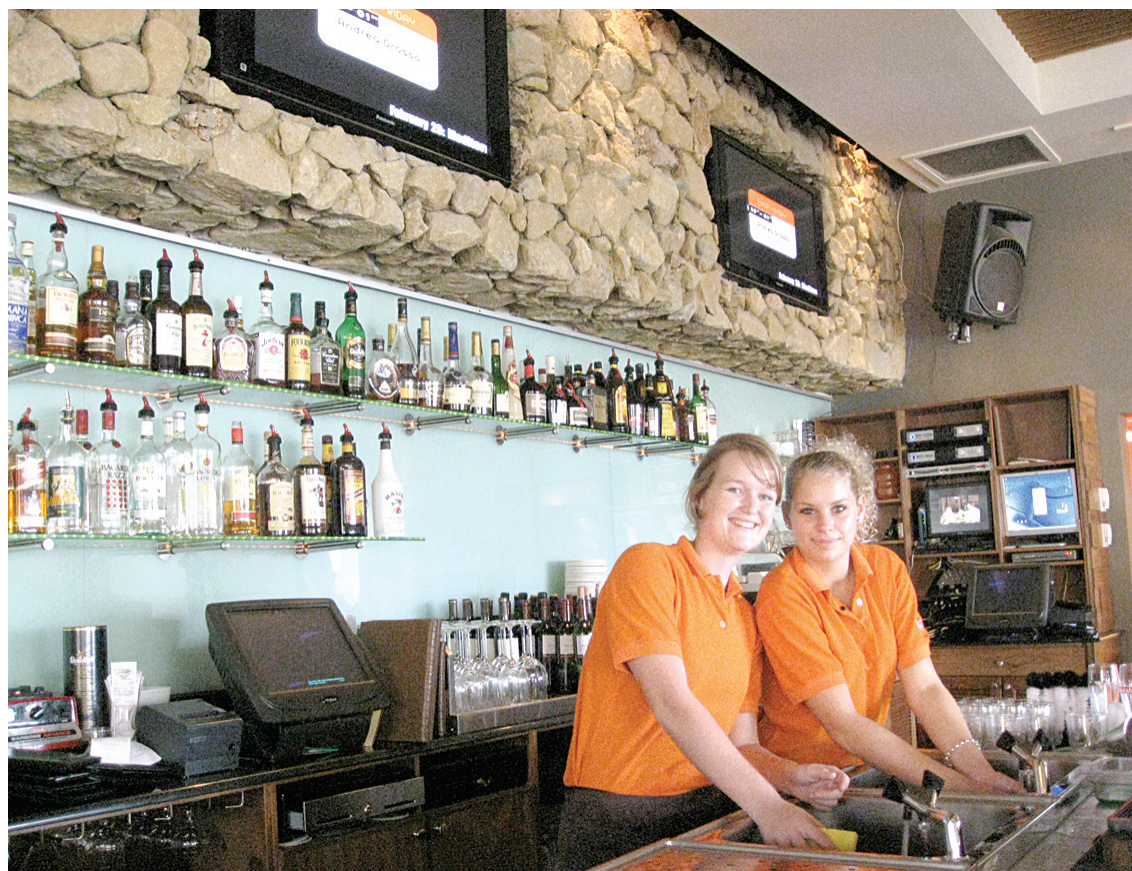
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CILO celebrates March 17 and 18



ORANJESTAD - CILO, the relaxed, happy City Lounge, which overlooks the marina and all its comings and goings, has come up with two specials: one for St. Patrick's Day and one for Aruba's Flag and National Anthem Day. Both are terrific and worth making a stop at CILO for. On St. Patrick's Day, March

17, CILO's chef is making St. Patrick Hamburgers for lunch; dinner is a duo of tenderloin and pork loin in a beer sauce. The island's most important day of the year is its Flag and National Anthem Day, the Dia

di Hymno y Bandera. CILO pays tribute with a seared grouper salad for lunch and a sea bass with deep-fried fungi and a zucchini and herb sauce for dinner. □

St. Patrick's Day fun at Cafe Chaos Joyride Is Playing At Cafe Chaos tonight March 17

ORANJESTAD - Joyride is a party band who's music consist of some of the best Pop, Rock and Funky songs from the 60's all the way up to the hits of today.

Joyride features local musicians Robby Luidens on drums, Mario Chow on guitar & David Cousins on bass and vocals. David is a native Philadelphian but has lived on Aruba (and loves it) for the better part of 17 years.

As much as the love to play, Joyride takes just as much pleasure in having fun and interacting with the audience.

Joyride is playing at Cafe Chaos on Wednesday March 17, starting at 10.30 pm. Cafe Chaos is a Dutch-style, Caribbean bar downtown Oranjestad. The atmosphere is cosy, relaxed and lively. The perfect hang-out to drink a cold beer or a special cocktail and listen to live music. □

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Board one of our luxurious catamarans for a Mexican Fiesta!

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red sail sports.



STEINFELD: 'MAGIC LIVE!' Theater-of-illusions show... now at the WESTIN - Aruba, see it live! 9pm nightly NightMagic-Comedy- Master of illusions. PREPARE to Witness TOP-Class Illusions, Magic & Comedy on Stage. Adam Steinfeld's Magic Live!® show, at the WESTIN - Aruba... 'Sensational!', 'Amazingly Funny!'...the Hottest ticket in Town! A Must See" 'BEST MAGIC SHOW, I've seen in ages...and I hate Magic! - Carol Butz, Belair, Maryland.

'MagicLive!...is Hip-Comedy Entertainment, Adam is the ultimate Modern Magician' - Jacque Polak, CBS-TV. Steinfeld sophisticated card-sharp street magic, mixed with grand theater illusions is a visual feast...this will be the highlight of your vacation. -Al Blanchard, mystery novelist, Boston, MA.

Steinfeld's, comedy magician, likable on-stage personality, comic interactive-wit, and amazing magic, mixed with his dream-like theatre-of-

Steinfeld is 'a Master of Magic', he invents many of his own Las Vegas illusions that are designed in England, fabricated in Vegas, and travels with him on tour, in a explosion of amazing fun.

THE MUST-SEE SHOW - YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS IT! AROUND THE WORLD AND BACK, Adam Steinfeld: 'MAGIC LIVE!', from Monte Carlo, Hong Kong, Orlando, Miami Beach, Biloxi, Boston, San Juan, New York, Aruba to Vegas, it's the coolest show in town, taking up where Houdini left off." **MAGIC-GRANDILLUSION - COMEDY**

onight at the Westin



IF YOU GO

What: Magic Live! theater-of-illusions show
Where: Westin - Aruba, palm beach (high-rise area)
Who: starring, comedy illusionist, Adam Steinfeld
Time: 9:00 pm, theater opens at 8:30pm
Tickets: at the door
Price: \$19.95 under 15, \$29.5 adults
Group Sales: 561-1090
website: www.MagicLive.com
Blog: www.MagicOnTheBeach.com

On the eve of the restaurant's 10th anniversary

Celebrating perfection at the Amazonia Churrascaria

Palm Beach – The crew at Amazonia Churrascaria is gearing up for the restaurant's 10th anniversary. Almost one decade ago, the authentic Brazilian concept of Rodigio Steakhouse offering continuous dining caught literal fire as a troop of waiters armed with mega skewers started roaming the colorful and friendly new indoor & outdoor dining room of Amazonia Churrascaria, introducing the fresh and novel style of dining to enthusiastic locals and visitors.

It was an instant success and Amazonia Churrascaria became a household name, a favorite place for family gatherings, celebrations or just great food. The restaurant gauchos continuously offer choice cuts of grilled beef, chicken, lamb, pork & sausage, seasoned to perfection and slow roasted over open flame.

The meat selections are accompanied by an extravagant forty-item, frequently changing seasonal salad bar where you can keep sampling until your beg for mercy, all for an inclusive price, excluding dessert and beverages.

On the dessert list the restaurant boasts homemade Crème Brule, Flan, Brazilian Cheese Cake, Chocolate Mousse Cake,

Apple Pie, and Papaya Cream. The restaurant features an extensive award winning Wine Spectator wine list, a well stocked bar and a terrific selection of Cuban cigars.

Managed by Hubert Solagnier with over thirty years of international Food & Beverage experience, the restaurant is the 'baby' of local entrepreneurs and investors Rene Kan and Milton Berlinski.

With over 40 frequently-changing salads on the salad bar, 14 types of grilled meats

and a team of waiters who are entertainers as well as carvers and an international staff, Hubert is proud of his fantastic crew, and the tastiest food in town, as well as potent Caipirinhas served in one of the most beautifully decorated dining rooms on the island.



**“Bring this ad with you and receive 15% DISCOUNT
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Fine & Affordable Dining at Pam Pam Restaurant

Meet Chef Ludwich Samson and his exquisite menu now unveiled!



Nestled in the quiet neighborhood of Boegoeroei, Perle d'Or apartment complex houses Dutch students and vacationers, as well as a cozy garden eatery, Pam Pam Restaurant & Bar. Aiming to attract a more diverse clientele, Pam Pam has recently adopted a more upscale dining concept. In order to pilot this new concept, rising local chef Ludwich Samson was brought on board, and in just two months on the job, he has

more than proven his worth.

Laid-back, refreshingly young, and ambitious, Ludwich began his career as a chef by enrolling in Aruba's hospitality and culinary arts school—the best decision he has ever made, he wholeheartedly claims. With ten years in the kitchen and three years as a chef, Ludwich has developed an impressive arsenal of cooking skills. He attributes the majority of his growth as a chef to his years

of working under his mentor, Vittorio Muscarlello, owner of Hostaria Da'Vittorio and one of the most highly respected chefs on Aruba.

In his two months with Pam Pam, Ludwich has entirely remodeled the kitchen to make it more efficient. He has also created a whole new menu featuring particularly unique dishes in order to distinguish Pam Pam from the endless number of restaurants along Aruba's hotel strip. While the menu still offers Dutch snacks and typical Dutch platters like sate to appease the many Dutch interns residing at Perle d'Or, the rest of the menu offers upscale fusion cuisine. Lemon grass and chillies give several seafood dishes a Thai flair; homemade ravioli and beef carpaccio salute Italy; crustacean ceviche adds a Peruvian element; and Indonesian spices add zest to a handful of casual main dishes.

Ludwich also craftily adds little unexpected twists to some classic dishes, elevating the uniqueness of his menu. One of his personal favorites is his porcini-crusted filet mignon served with a thyme red-wine reduction. He also delights in the fact that most diners have a hard time figuring out the sweet and spicy deliciousness of his signature crustacean platter. Other interesting interpretations include lump-crab lollipops, chicken cordon blue unorthodoxly stuffed with ricotta and bacon, and for dessert, tiramisu that promises an untraditional layer of decadent Bailey's chocolate mousse.

Needless to say, Ludwich is creative in the kitchen and works extremely hard, currently putting in 12 to 16 hours a day, seven days a week; but he insists that this is not what makes a good chef good. “I simply love what



I do for a living,” confides Ludwich, and this is what guarantees success in the kitchen and contented diners. Of course, being a chef can be downright stressful, but Ludwich thrives on the rush of adrenaline on busy nights. And when he peers out of the kitchen and sees a restaurant full of people enjoying their meals, he experiences immense satisfaction. For reservations call: 5877710 or 7483848, or visit us at www.pampamaruba.com. □

Blood, Salt and Tears

By: Dr. Carlos Viana

President John F. Kennedy in a speech given at the dinner before the America's Cup Races of 1962 said "All of us have in our veins the exact same percentage of salt in our blood that exists in the ocean, and, therefore, we have salt in our blood, in our sweat, in our tears. We are tied to the ocean. And when we go back to the sea -- whether it is to sail or to watch it -- we are going back from whence we came." Wise words and physiologically correct.

Salt is the spark plug of our metabolic system. Although, medical researchers have associated eating an excess of salt with high blood pressure, not having enough salt has its own set of health problems. Salt is essential for the prevention of muscle cramps and the twenty-seven percent of the body's salt which is in the bones is absolutely vital to making the structure of bones firm. Osteoporosis, in a major way, is a result of salt and water shortage in the body. Vital for maintaining sexuality and libido, salt also helps prevent varicose and spider veins.

Hypnatremia is a lack of sodium in the blood caused by excessive sweating, persistent diarrhea, overuse of diuretic drugs, or too drastic a salt free diet. The symptoms generally mirror those of dehydration which include apathy, confusion, nausea, and fatigue. Test subjects in clinical studies on salt and blood pressure

consume standard table salt. Additionally, researchers did not adjust for characteristics that might have predisposed subjects to hypertension, including high rates of alcohol consumption, high body mass index, very low potassium excretion, and dehydration. Unrefined sea salt is a much healthier choice than common table salt. Natural sea salt contains about 80 mineral elements that the body needs.

Because high blood pressure rarely has any symptoms, the only way to know if you are at risk it is to have it measured. I recommend that everyone have their blood pressure taken while lying down in a stress-free environment. Blood pressure values can be pushed higher by pain, anxiety, including the stress of visiting the doctor, sometimes called the white coat syndrome, or some medications.

Blood pressure (BP) comes in two numbers. There is a high and low number usually written as a high/low. The high number represents the systolic BP and is the pressure of the heart pumping your blood. The low number represents the diastolic BP and is the pressure your blood pushes against on the walls of your arteries when your heart is not pumping or is at "rest." Normal blood pressure should range between 100/70 to 120/80. If your BP is higher than these numbers, you have a greater risk of developing cardiovascular disease, problems with your heart

and or arteries. We describe your risk as moderate if your pressure is around 140/100. Severe risk is 160/115, or more and a physician should be consulted immediately.

Everybody should be aware of hypertension and vascular disease which are heart and circulatory problems. The higher your blood pressure, the greater your risk of stroke, heart attack and heart failure. Hypotension or low blood pressure can result in loss of consciousness. The "standard" treatment for blood pressure problems is pharmaceuticals. Several medical studies have monitored people taking blood pressure lowering drugs, typically diuretics and beta-blockers.

The conclusion of these studies is that people suffer from many unnecessary side effects, among them impotence and an increased risk for heart disease, just what you are trying to avoid. Additionally, some people have an imbalance where the body does not excrete sodium. For these individuals, diuretics can actually make the problem worse by also lowering potassium levels.

The World Health Organization has listed hypertension, or high blood pressure, as one of the conditions treated effectively by acupuncture. In many cases high blood pressure can be brought under control through changes in diet and lifestyle. Lifestyle factors may include caffeine, alcohol intake, stress, lack of exercise, and smoking.

Attaining ideal body weight is perhaps the single most important recommendation we can make to lower BP.

Dietary problems include the modern diet of low-fiber, high sugar, high saturated fat and insufficient intake of magnesium, vitamin C and essential fatty acids. Specific dietary factors include high sodium to potassium ratio. Natural sea salt, not the highly processed table salt readily available, will not harm you if your intake of potassium and water is balanced.

Fresh fruit is a good source of potassium. Drinking enough clean water is critical for nearly every bodily function. Dietary supplements can also provide support, but it's a good idea to check your personal needs with a certified clinical nutritionist.

If this is not enough, we look at metabolic imbalances in the body. At Viana Natural Healing Center, we do hair analysis to test for imbalances and toxins contributing to these and other health problems.

Get The Point! Hopefully, everyone will realize blood pressure problems are more than an excess of salt. Identifying imbalances and counseling on good dietary and lifestyle habits can go a long way. In our home by the sea, there is no chemistry set in our kitchen. We drink plenty of clean water, use only natural sea salt, pressure lowering, fresh garlic, good omega, virgin olive oil, and gladly cry



salty tears while cutting our onions to flavor our food. The facts on salt are another of the many dietary misconceptions you have heard. Call so we can help you put the spark back in your plugs.

CARLOS VIANA, Ph. D. is an Oriental Medical Doctor (O.M.D.) having studied in Shanghai, China; a Board Cert. Clinical Nutritionist (C.C.N.), a fellow member of the Board Certified Association of Addiction Professionals (C.Ad.), the Chairperson of the Latin American Committee of the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology (IAOMT), a Rejuvenating Cell Therapist and specializes in Anti-Aging Medicine, has a weekly radio program, writes and lectures extensively. For information: VIANA NATURAL HEALING CENTER NV, Kibaima 7, Aruba, TEL: 585-1270 FAX: 585-4789, Web Sight: www.vianaheal.com

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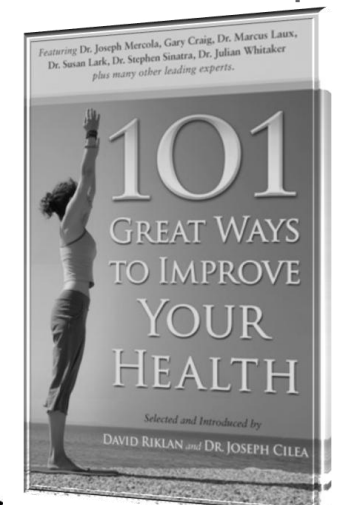
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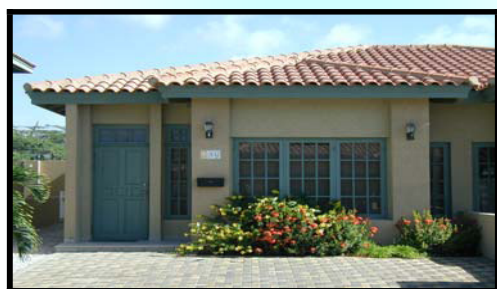
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Venezuela dice actuará sólo si hay “prueba irrefutable” sobre ETA

MADRID (Reuters) - Venezuela dijo el martes en España que actuará en torno a una investigación sobre supuestos vínculos de su Gobierno con el grupo separatista vasco ETA sólo cuando haya “pruebas irrefutables”, en el más reciente hecho dentro de una polémica que amenaza con dañar lazos mutuos.

Un comunicado de la embajada de Venezuela en Madrid ratificó el rechazo del Gobierno del presidente Hugo Chávez a un auto de un juez español que lo acusa de tener relación con ETA y con el mayor grupo guerrillero colombiano las FARC.

Además, recordó que Caracas “condena al terrorismo en todas sus formas y manifestaciones y hacemos énfasis en la necesidad de combatirlo en el marco de los principios del Derecho Internacional”, de acuerdo al texto del comunicado difundido en Madrid.

Esa posición es similar a la expuesta en una nota conjunta del Gobierno venezolano y del español el 6 de marzo, en ocasión de la divulgación del auto del juez Eloy Velasco que señala que hay indicios de que Caracas habría ayudado a ETA y a las FARC, lo cual ha sido rechazado por el propio Chávez.

“Reiteramos nuestro



El presidente bielorruso, Alexander Lukashenko (izquierda en la imagen), junto a su colega Hugo Chávez durante una visita de al estado de Aragua, Venezuela, mar 16 2010. Venezuela dijo el martes en España que actuará en torno a una investigación sobre supuestos vínculos de su Gobierno con el grupo separatista vasco ETA sólo cuando haya ‘pruebas irrefutables’, en el más reciente hecho dentro de una polémica que amenaza con dañar lazos mutuos. REUTERS/Miraflores Palace/Handout

compromiso de actuar frente a pruebas irrefutables que demuestren objetivamente actividades de esa naturaleza”, dijo el comunicado de la embajada venezolana. También denunció una campaña para enturbiar “las buenas relaciones que mantenemos con el Reino de España y declaramos nuestro propósito de ayudar a conservarlas”.

Algunos grandes medios de comunicación y “sectores

adversos a la República Bolivariana de Venezuela” pretenden mantenerlo como asunto de la agenda política interna de España, agregó.

En el auto difundido a fin de febrero, el magistrado de la Audiencia Nacional sostiene que el Gobierno de Chávez cooperó para que ambos grupos armados mantuvieran encuentros para intercambiar técnicas de guerrilla o información para un posible atentado en España contra altos

funcionarios colombianos, como el presidente Alvaro Uribe.

El presidente del Gobierno español, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, anunció posteriormente que había

pedido explicaciones al Gobierno de Venezuela, lo que desencadenó un cruce de declaraciones con Chávez, quien respondió que no tiene que dar explicaciones a nadie y que España saldría perdiendo si las relaciones entre ambos países se deterioraran.

En su auto, Velasco procesa a seis miembros de ETA y a siete de las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) por delitos de colaboración con la banda armada, conspiración para cometer homicidios o tenencia de explosivos y ordena su detención internacional pues todos están en libertad.

La ETA y las FARC son considerados grupos terroristas por Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea. Los acusados estarían en Venezuela y en Cuba, pero Chávez afirmó que ya no tienen relación con la banda armada. “Son venezolanos, están casados aquí, tienen hijos y nietos, estamos seguros de que no están participando en ninguna actividad de terrorismo”, manifestó el presidente venezolano a la prensa. □

Despiden a ministro de Justicia de Perú

LIMA (Reuters) - El ministro de Justicia de Perú, Aurelio Pastor, fue despedido el martes tras ser cuestionado por otorgar un polémico indulto presidencial a un empresario de televisión condenado por vender la línea editorial de su canal al Gobierno del ex presidente Alberto Fujimori.

Pastor fue fuertemente criticado por intermediar y defender el indulto a José Crousillat, ex dueño de América Televisión, condenado por recibir sobornos del ex asesor de inteligencia de Fujimori, Vladimiro Montesinos.

El presidente peruano, Alan García, otorgó en diciembre del año pasado el indulto por razones humanitarias, luego de que Crousillat presentara informes médicos que afirmaban que tenía dolencias cardíacas. Sin embargo, García revocó el indulto el fin de semana pasado argumentando que Crousillat había “hecho sucesivas apariciones públicas mostrándose en un aparente buen estado de salud, lo cual desvirtúa la causa por la que fue solicitado su indulto”. En la resolución suprema difundida el martes por la Presidencia, García dio “por concluido el nombramiento de Aurelio Pastor Valdivieso en el cargo de ministro de Estado, en el despacho de Justicia, dándosele las gracias por los importantes servicios prestados a la Nación”. El Gobierno no informó sobre el reemplazo de Pastor. □

Registrador Colombia niega haber consumido licor en legislativas

BOGOTA (Reuters) - El registrador nacional de Colombia, Carlos Ariel Sánchez, negó el martes haber consumido licor durante el caótico conteo de votos de las elecciones legislativas, después de que el Gobierno pidió investigar el presunto comportamiento irregular del funcionario.

“Estuve sentado con muchos de ustedes. Me gustaría que los muchos testigos que hay digan si yo siquiera olí a alcohol. Mi conducta ese día, esa noche y esa madrugada fue laboral”, dijo el funcionario a periodistas.

La declaración de Sánchez se produjo después de que el presidente Alvaro Uribe solicitó a la Procuraduría General de la Nación investigar

al registrador.

El funcionario, cuestionado por el caos en el conteo de votos que dos días después de los comicios no ha permitido conocer la composición definitiva del Congreso ni el ganador de la consulta del Partido Conservador para elegir su candidato a la presidencia, dijo que está dispuesto a responder a cualquier investigación por parte de la Procuraduría.

El Gobierno aseguró conocer denuncias de varios ciudadanos según las cuales el funcionario y otras personas habrían violado las normas que obligan a no consumir licor el día de elecciones. □

Fiscalía Chile investiga actuación organismos alerta tras sismo

SANTIAGO (Reuters) - La Fiscalía Nacional de Chile dijo el martes que abrió una investigación sobre la cuestionada actuación de la oficina de emergencias y la Armada, que no alertaron a tiempo sobre un devastador tsunami luego de un potente terremoto en el centro y sur del país.

Durante los minutos y horas posteriores al terremoto de magnitud 8,8 del 27 de febrero, la Oficina Nacional de Emergencias (Onemi) y la oficina de la Armada encargada de alertar maremotos no pudieron ponerse de acuerdo en la emisión de una alerta de tsunami. "Inicié una investigación para determinar si hay delito o no hay delito. No hay ningún prejuicio. No hay antecedente preconcebido", dijo a periodistas el fiscal nacional Sabas Chahuán, tras reunirse con el presidente Sebastián Piñera.

"El que sea responsable, que responda y el que no es responsable, que quede claro", agregó.

Tras el incidente, la entonces directora de la Onemi renunció, mientras que el jefe del Servicio Hidrográfico y Oceanográfico (SHOA) fue destituido.

La Onemi acusó al SHOA de darle información poco clara y de descartar el peligro de grandes oleadas en la zona costera como consecuencia del terremoto.

Un reportaje de la televisión estatal TVN mostró cómo un funcionario del SHOA informó a la ONEMI de variaciones menores en el nivel del mar que, aseguró, no constituían tsunamis en localidades que fueron devastadas por una serie de olas gigantes.

En total, el terremoto y los tsunamis dejaron unos 500 muertos identificados hasta el momento, además de cuantiosos daños materiales estimados en varios miles de millones de dólares.

Decenas de personas que fueron arrastradas por el mar continúan desaparecidas.



Imagen de archivo de los restos de un pueblo luego de un tsunami provocado por el terremoto que azotó a Chile, en Dichato. Marzo 5 2010. La Fiscalía Nacional de Chile dijo el martes que abrió una investigación sobre la cuestionada actuación de la oficina de emergencias y la Armada, que no alertaron a tiempo sobre un devastador tsunami luego de un potente terremoto en el centro y sur del país. REUTERS/Cristobal Saavedra/ARCHIVO

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